

Anthropomorphic Me.

Chapter -8-

In 1975 I had been divested by karma of my lead guitarist status. This social shipwreck of a situation found me lost in the doldrums of cowtown. That cold and snowy January saw me drearily thinking one way, meekly speaking another and then unconsciously rebelling against both. The Chaos of 1974 had left me not as a consistent human, but rather a social chameleon of shifting paradoxical points of views. Everything in my life was orbiting around the circle of my confused and insecure childhood. What I didn't understand was; all that monetary bullshit going on in the world around me, didn't even add up to a hill of beans. So I watched helplessly as my life became this high wire balancing act which had to be mastered for survival sake.

At that point I could no longer tolerate being hugged by friends and family. Hugging as a form of affection made me very uncomfortable. My worth was non-existent. The monetary shame of Cowtown culture; as the cornerstone of my self worth, had soiled my soul. On the one hand Greyship had created a privileged arrogance; I thought I was this hot shot rock guitarist. While on the other hand, the Zap experience had crushed that privileged arrogance. That experience had shown that ability was no substitute for monetized social acceptance. I wasn't from a rich high school click of pretty boys. That meant I was a nobody from flytown. Flytown was ruled by the fists. I've often said that, *"childhood is something we spend the rest of our lives trying to overcome"*. And If I had a mission from god, it was to purge my childhood demons. But this battle with *"the enemy within"* took 10 years of hard psychological counseling; and 30 years of active meditation, before I gain the upper hand over my own thought patterns. But it was well worth the cost. As Socrates said long ago, *"The unexamined life is not worth living"*. So my journey within began right around the time **Master Maitreya** move from the Himalayas to London. Little did I know that at that time, *"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy."* (**William Shakespeare's Hamlet**)

That January I began to attend General Education Development (GED) classes at 52 Starling Street in Columbus Ohio. Back then the Columbus Public Schools and State Equivalence Office of Testing Services had created a program whereby flytown folks like me could get a diploma. I was still living at my moms and was able to walk the few miles to and from school for classes. About this time Jim Jenkins and Danny White urged me to reform our old band. It turned out to be a huge economic mistake for me in the long run. We were able to rent a storage space in the same complex that Zap had used. Jim had an Ampeg Amp and Guitar. I furnished a 300 Watt PA system; Shure mics and stands. The Vox bass guitar and Ampeg amp I let Dan use. Also, I still had the Sound City amp, Les Paul and Strat guitars, plus effects pedals from my ZAP days. Dan's situation in life had become much more tenuous than mine. He had been forced to survive by his wits on the mean streets of old

cowtown. On the bright side Dan had hooked up with Sally Monk, a high school friend of Vicky. They also were planning to get married. Dan was coping with the same sort economic exploitation the poor kids on First Ave had to contend with. He had been in and out of reform schools during the mid 1960s and had earned his PHD from surviving on the streets. Jim on the other hand was still dealing with his parents who didn't approve of his hippy ways. He fought constant battles with his parents over the length of his hair. I remember his dad yelling, "I ain't gonna have it" when ever Jim refused to go along with their demands. But as luck would have it, Jim had met Judy Pope. They were planning to get an apartment together. Then disaster stuck. Our storage space where Jim, Dan and I rehearsed was broken into and most of my stuff got stolen. Years later Jim told me he overheard Dan talking about selling the stolen equipment. He suspected Dan was involved and told me so privately. Dan was in need of money at that time. It wasn't the first time he had been linked to taking other people's stuff. In 1967 when he was in reform school I had let him borrow my bass. Jim kept pestering him about it. In the end it took a year and a half to get it back from him, but he did return it. Dan was evolving beyond the hood too.

That March Kathy and I had moved into 493 Barnett Road Columbus, Ohio (43203). It was a new build half double and had a huge modern basement in which to set up my music. This was right around the birth of the **Do-It-Yourself** movement in American music. **Jim Shepard, Mike Rep** and I all got in on the ground floor. From the 60s through to the 70s songwriting and the recording process changed drastically. Back in the early days one person would write, another artist would record, and then a group of hired players would most likely take it out on the road. In all likelihood the label would hire a producer who would call the shots. Then all the cost would be deducted from artist's royalties. The result was that most songwriters never got paid.

The D.I.Y. movement establish the model that cut out all the middlemen. But it was limited to small runs of 250 to 1000 LPs. Moreover, word of mouth and mom and pop records shop were the main promotional tools for getting your music heard by the public. From the 1950s to the late 1960s most pop bands didn't write their own songs. But by 1975 this had changed. People like us rejected the institutional exploitation by the record industry. The market had shift away from 45 singles to LPs. Suddenly, the opportunity to be in total control of your art emerged. But it wasn't until 1982, after my divorce from Kathy, that I was able to afford to put out my first 45 record. That was my first real Do-It-Yourself experience. By then Moles Records and Magnolia Thunderpussy records had open up on the OSU campus. As far as I know they were the first to sell our **D.I.Y.** products.



On May 9th Kathy and I got married. At first I felt very uncomfortable about my new middle class status. Some of my alley peers who had always resented my mother's mental

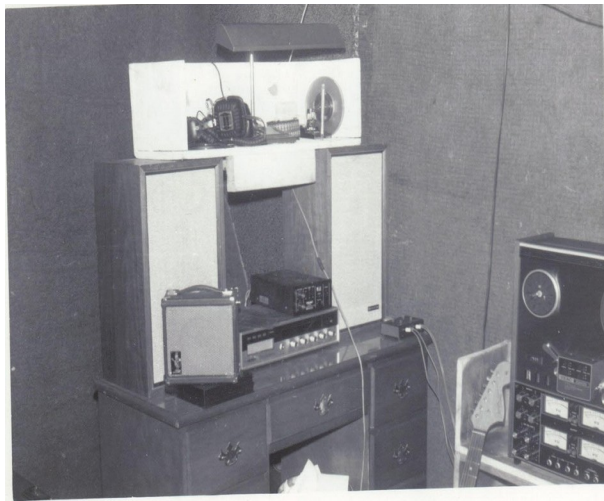
issues started to cop an attitude towards my exodus. Mom had a habit at yelling and screaming at them if they came around the house. They didn't like my new status and I didn't know how to cope with that socially. On August 7th 1975 the State Department of Education certified my Ohio Certificate of High School Equivalence. But early that April Kathy's dad; who was the superintendent of Borden's Columbus Coated Fabrics, had pulled some strings with Mayor Tom Moody and I got hired by the City of Columbus. Ralph Leesburg a retired Army major was my boss and he asked me to set up a print shop for the Department of Community Services. So I shopped around and secured the equipment I thought was needed. Anyway, I had been researching the Teac 3340s which ran at 7.5 or 15 inches per second. It was priced at a \$1000 dollars but Kathy was beginning to have 2nd thoughts about my music. Her father was totally against my music from the jump. He resented me yet was pushing for us to start a family. He had been a Marine Captain during WW-2 and most of his men were killed at the Battle of Iwo Jima. He was old school and had no use for hippies like me who wanted to play rock n' roll. He saw my attempt at building a home recording studio as a great big cash drain. At that point it became clear that he was going to micromanage me and the marriage. I was so stupid and naive at that point that I didn't understand what he was doing. I didn't learn how to size people and situations up until I moved into Milo Arts.



By September of 1975 the hippy culture had been totally usurped by corporations. Both AM and FM Radio only played endless mind numbing music by the major labels. "Totally moronic, boring repetition" was the brand they were selling. But a few LP records were free of the entertainment formulas. **Led Zeppelin's Physical Graffiti, Brain Eno's Another Green Day and Pictures At An Exhibition** by **Isao Tomita**, plus **AC/DC** were a few exceptions that come

to mind. At the time I was unaware and missed out on **Hawkind's "Warrior On The Edge"** collaboration with poet **Michael Moorcock**. Nor did I know about **Lemmy Kilmister** (Jimi Hendrix's Roadie) and his drug bust in Canada. Those guys were not being reviewed by the major media firms. Hollywood was even in worse condition. **Steven Spielberg's Jaws** and **The Rocky Horror Picture Show** were

the only artistic progression in film that year. So the stage was set for punk and disco to explode. And boy did they!



I called my basement studio "Fatload Records" and from July to December of 1975 I worked on 5 projects: "Burned Out Fuzz Tone Degenerates" with Stik Hoffman, "Project #3" with Libby Benson,

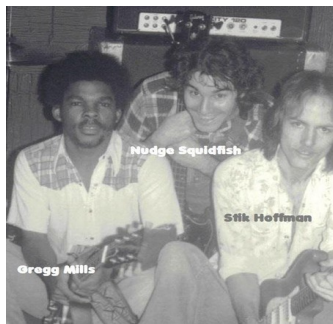
"Rock & Roll Heros" with Stik Hoffman, "Reject" my first solo attempt, and "Recordings" with Jim Jenkins, Greg Mills and Stik Hoffman. Over the years I'd put together a few compilation cassettes from these projects but most of it has never seen the light of day for which I am very grateful. After the "robbery" I was left only with my guitar and the ARB PA head. The ARB had a line out and reverb which I converted from Hi Z to Low Z impedance. Kathy let me use her 8 track stereo (RCA inputs) system and later on I was able to add an upright piano somebody had given us. When I got the Teac 3340s Stik and I put up sound proofing and he brought over a bunch of his equipment. So we got to work and trying to figure out how we could use it. At that point drum machines didn't exist and a cheap ARP synth ran about \$2000 which was way beyond my means. So all the stuff we recorded was bass, guitar, harp and vocal. There were no drums to those early days of recording. From this very primitive recording set up I learned the notion of how a big studio desk system worked. It was mostly about the ins and outs, monitoring and sync. Later on we experimented with backwards guitar. This involved changing the reel to reel direction for one of the tracks. By 1980 I had learned ping-ponging backwards tracks; both internally and externally between two tape decks. My knowledge had evolved. I was adding new studio tricks at an alarming rate to my tool kit. This can be seen on my song *"Man Machine Simulation"* which was an early attempt at *"Object Music"*. I wanted to release this on my first 45 but Mike Rep felt that *"Wedding Vows"* and *"Dorthy 1..2.3.."* were a stronger sales choice. Nevertheless, we ended up giving most of the 45 copies away. Rep has always had his ear on the public vinyl zeitgeist. Looking back, I think he made the right choice. After all, he created the Squidfish public persona and was very successful at introducing Nudge Squidfish to the Cowtown public. The fact is I owe a huge debt to Mike Rep. Without his support of my art, none of it would not have seen the light of day.

Some time that fall of 1975 I bought a cheap Ludwig drum kit off a kid who had joined the Army. The day I was to pick the drums up I was scheduled to have a wisdom tooth extracted by my dentists. Within 15 minutes of arriving home; mysteriously, I came down with a fever of 102 degrees. I just collapsed. I was totally unconscious for 4 hours. So Stik volunteered to deliver the drums to our basement studio on Barnett Road. But during my black out something very strange occurred. I had a vision of being led up some marble steps into a greek Parthenon like building. I was introduced by Master Djwhal Khul to Master Maitreya. I had no idea what was happening. I was in a state of pure shock and awe. They were having a conversation concerning my future self but I was not allowed to listen. It was like I was inside a video. But it wasn't a dream. It was a "Vision". At least that is the only way I can describe the experience. Who the fuck where these people? WTF happened?

It was only in the year 2000 that I found out who these two individuals were. But back in 1975 they were ghostly strangers; totally mysterious. For many years I just blew it off as a fever induced hallucination. I figure it was not real. When the fever

passed I woke up. Stik and Kathy were standing over me. They looked seriously worried. However, they were very surprised that the fever passed so quickly and I was back to normal. They were about to take me to the emergency room. But the fever had passed as quickly as it had come on. Later, when I told my dentist about it he insisted that fevers like that don't occur in such a short time span. If it was an infection from the extraction of the wisdom tooth it would have lasted a few days, and not just 4 hours. He was pissed that I questioned his skill. So I quickly moved on to the next adventure.

Stik and I soon learned that we could EQ and add Effects to the mic Inputs; and later on, to the outputs of the Teac 3340s. This was before I discovered the notion of foldback in the mid 1980s. Years later I am still applying the very same input/output principles to my Teac 32 track digital stand alone unit and my Ableton/Reason laptop software systems. That August of 1975 Stik and I were astonished when we



bounced our 1st track inside the 3340s. It was truly mind numbing experience for us back then! As we bounced we simultaneously overdub. Then we would erase the original track and record something else in its place. Suddenly we could end up with a total of 6 or 7 tracks on a 4 channel deck. At the time **Glyn Johns** had been using a pyramid mic setup for the recording of drums on Led Zeppelin's first LP. He used Neumann U67s at 50 Degrees Left. A Neumann U67s at 50 Degrees Right. And a Telefunken 251S Dead center Overhead. This created a cone of sound around the

drums which worked well on Vinyl. Later on I would adopt this approach using Shure 58 and 57s mics.

All this "layer cake" theory forced me to explore my muse. The possibilities were endless. Furthermore, the same sense of exploration was happening in my printing craft. I began to work with multiple colored overlays in the darkroom. This is before computers replaced paste up and layout work in the printing business. Anybody familiar with the silk screening process will understand my meaning. I began to think in strategic terms like producer **George Martin**. I was pursuing my **Emitt Rhodes** dream. I was headed towards a one man band orientation. Years later this dream would become a complex audio-visual unit. This new approach freed me from almost all market considerations. No need for Journalists, Lawyers, Sales, A & R men or Marketing. I began to think in more abstract mathematical terms in my approach to song recording. I began to understand that If the song was cool it would simply sell itself. **Pete Townsend** once said, "*Musicians have to listen before they can begin to play*". Unfortunately though, I was still not a songwriter at that point. Yet, this cycle of revelation and innovation would repeated itself many times throughout my career. What I discovered in one discipline I could also apply to another. Not only could I apply this "multi-task layer cake" notion to my recording studio and graphic arts darkroom; but also later on, to my "philosophy". Being able

to take a notion beyond its original intent gave me total control over my art and philosophy. All that was needed was to pass through the fires of occult initiation and learn how to write a decent pop song.

On November 15th of 1975 I received my certificate of completion in "*Basic Photography*" from Eastland Vocational Center in Groveport Ohio. It was a class run by the OSU School of Fine Arts in conjunction with Eastland Vocational Center and the city paid for it because it was job related. The city had set up my print shop at 425 West Rich Street which was also the location of the CETA Summer Youth Program for the Westside of Columbus Ohio. Robert Marshall was the program supervisor for that area. Every Friday he had about 1500 kids come to pick up their payroll checks. Most of them came from the "bottoms" slums. Sometimes fights would start and he had to break it up. From the end of May till the beginning of September he was in constant chaos. But the rest of the year he loafed like most of the other staff. For the most part Mr. Marshall stayed to himself but every once in a while he would try to act like my boss which wasn't the case. I was my own boss and reported to Ralph Leesburg and Odell T. Welch, director of the Department of Community Services City of Columbus Ohio. Other than that I'd stay out of his way. Overall things were speeding up for me with the music and the printing. On March 18th 1976 I earned a diploma in "*Advance Photography*" from Eastland Vocational. Moreover, I also got a diploma in the "*Formsman Cold Type Composition Clinic*" in Cleveland on June 18th 1976. And finally, by August of 1976 I had been accepted into the "*In-Plant Printing Management Association*" which opened a lot of doors for me job wise.

During my lunch breaks I would go to "*Whitey Lunzar Music*" on East Main Street downtown and *Whitey* would let me play the store's guitars. *Whitey* was always very cool about letting musicians come and hang out. He knew all the musicians in town back in the 1960s. At the time **Ed Whitney** (Salesman), **Mark Chatfield** (Salesman), **Bill Foley** (Repair Tec), **Dino E. Bradley** (Salesman), and **Roger Sargent** (Tec Repair) were all working there in the mid 70s. *Ed* had a horn band and was constantly booked year round at the Holiday Inn. In time he opened "**Star Track Studio**" out on the east side. I did a couple of sessions there with my gang of friends in 1983 before I moved to Nashville. *Mark Chatfield* later worked with **The Godz** and **Bob Seger**. When I first started my home studio he advised me on tape hiss. Mark sold me a DBX noise reduction unit for the 3340s tape deck. Tape hiss was a big problem back then. This fixed it. I remember **Eric Moore** showing me the artwork for his first **Godz** LP one day when he was in the shop. *Bill Foley* went on to become the owner of **German Village Music Haus**. Over the years he has been my go to guy for repairs. *Dino Bradley* moved to Nashville a few years before me. Later on he built the state of the art "*Dino Bradley Studios*" in Goodlettsville Tenn. He also moonlighted as Guitarist for **Hank Williams Jr.**, and did some "free" work for me on my **Nashville in Nashville** Project in 1984. For a while he was one of the Nashville guys for club work I think.



Roger Sargent drove in from Newark Ohio to Whitey Lunzar's 5 days a week. At the time him and *Bill Foley* were the repair techs at the store. They seemed to always have a backlog of repairs. *Roger* had a cover band that made "money" but it seemed that he could not hold onto his musicians who kept jumping ship for better paying gigs. One day he stopped by my studio to check out what I had been doing. But *Roger* had little interest in my non-profit D.I.Y. studio. He did do a free modification on the ARB PA so that it would balance the impedance with the 3340s. Back then mic distortion was a problem. Like most of the other staff he was into the Benjamins. One day his band quit and he had some bookings coming up and needed a guitarist and a drummer. He offered me \$75 bucks a gig and I jumped on it. I wasn't in the union like the rest of the guys at *Whitey Lunzar Music* so he got me for rock bottom wages. This shut up my father in law about the recording studio for a while. Next *Roger* hired **Dave Kover** on drums from Grove City and it was off to the races for this new band he called "**SARGENT**".



Roger asked us to sign a 6 month commitment contract which stated our % per show. I think he also hustled a booking agency for other bands. Mostly we played Top 40 radio at RoadHouse bars in the eastern half of Ohio. So three times a week



Dave and I drove out to his welding shop in Newark Ohio; which was another one of his interests. I think he also rented out a few houses. Both *Dave* and *Roger* were highly skilled musicians. *Roger* sang a lot like Paul McCartney. So I got locked in to this cover music thing. I was a hired gun and my father-in-law was always bitching, "the baby needs new shoes". So I went along with the "selling beers to horny hillbillies routine". Roger provided the van and all our equipment except for my guitar. And we played about 3 times a month.

One night; as I watched a cowboy squeeze a barmaid's buttock, I began to have misgivings. The venues were Rotary Clubs, Eagles and Moose lodges. Sometimes high schools and private party house gigs. That helped cash wise but after awhile my father-in-law start bitching about the miles I was putting on the family car. Around Xmas of 1975 me and *Dave* decided that *Roger* was the only one really benefiting from the arrangement. I think Roger had it set up as 60/40 split with Dave and I each getting only 20% of the gig. So we turned in our notice and *Roger* was back to square one. I never hear from *Roger* again.

Dave and I figured that we would try to get *Stik Hoffman* to play bass and start

another group. *Stik* and I were always in the studio when ever we could hook up. *Stik* was in a band with *Gregg Mills* and *TJ* and had cut a killer 45. Gregg had received a letter from **Peter Grant** of **Swan Songs (Free, Led Zeppelin)** about a record deal. I was in shock! At the time they were doing wild gigs on the west side. However *Stik* and Greg had a falling out and their band OD. Greg showed me the Swan Song letter but I think he never show it to *TJ* and *Stik* out of spite. When Gregg played the 45 for me, I thought it was a perfect fit for the **Swan Songs** label. Stupid me, I never ask for a copy of the 45 but it rocked. Anyway, *Stik* accepted our offer. This time we would split the bookings “even steven” between all the members.

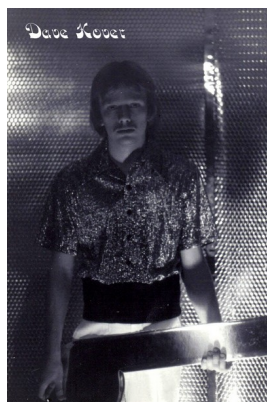


By that time *Stik*, Dave and I had formed a new group. We called it “**Vision**”. The three of us pitched in equally and bought a PA System. I was using a fender bandmaster and *Stik* had an Ampeg SVT amp. We did Yardbirds, Led Zeppelin, Who and Rolling Stones covers mostly. But for about 6 months I was bringing in two good incomes and going to class. Then the father in law did a cost analysis and told me I was only breaking even. WTF? He viewed the situation as an expensive hobby of mine.

After that, Kathy’s folks started to put pressure on us about having a baby. So boom! I got Kathy pregnant and quickly realized that we were going to need more income.

The big news that year was the birth of my Daughter Jane Ann Martin on February 7th 1976 and by the middle of March of 1976 we were ready to hit the road. I had contacted Dynamic Entertainment Inc on Yearling Road in Columbus and they agreed to be our booking agent. So we began a series of one nighters in northern ohio on friday and saturday nights. There was one show that stands out in my mind. We did this ballroom gig at the Holiday Inn in Cleveland and had a light show to match our set list. Bobby, *Stik*’s little brother was our roadie and was running the light show. The ballroom had this 500 watt Sure PA head that they insisted we use because it was pre-wired into the house speaker system. In between the sets we would go out to the van and smoke dope and pass around the vodka bottle. After the show as we were getting ready to drive back to Columbus, suddenly like a bolt of lightning, Bobby and *Stik* decided that they were going to steal that Sure PA head. Dave and I tried to talk them out of it but those West Side Boys went crazy. They zipped right on back into the ballroom, snagged the PA head, then vamoosed in a cloud of dust. It took both of them to carry the goddamn thing because it was way too heavy. Both were drunk and stoned out of their gourds. As they got back into the van *Stik* floored the gas and it was Hi-O-Silver! Va-va-va-room...The rest of us were bouncing around like ping pong balls in the van as *Stik* hightailed it out of Cleveland. A few gigs later *Stik* had hooked up with *Laurie Washburn* who became our keyboard player. She was drop dead gorgeous and they seemed to be very happy together at first. They got a house and our band moved there because it was

near to the park in Hilliard Ohio.



That year of 1976 saw me work on 5 recording projects: "*What's Next? Stop, Look, Listen. Nudge's Solo. Bolder Than Yesterday. And, Project #12*". My 1st object music attempt was on the What's Next project featuring the track "*The Party*". It was inspired by **Cream's** cut on **Disraeli Gears** (1967) called "**Mother's Lament.**" This was when I became interested in "reality" as a musical instrument. Experimentation had grabbed a hold of my muse. I became obsessed with this new wonderland I was creating. I had noticed that all objects in my reality could produce a note of music. It seemed to me that all these sounds I was discovering could be organized into a classical music framework. Obviously none of these experiments had any commercial value. But that was not my goal. I was becoming a Do-It-Yourself (D.I.Y.) songwriter and slowly honing my recording craft as an engineer. The 2nd attempt at Object Music came on the "*Nudge Solo*" project with the musical soundscape, "*Nothing to understand, reason or be upset about*". Only later would I become focused on trying to

write "Pop Music" and find that I was moving in two very different directions at the same time.

Stik and I had sort of put the band on hold so as to focus on studio work for a bit. I think Stik and Laurie were trying to build a life together and finding out that it wasn't working. I've always felt that it is the creative aspect that binds musicians together. And when creative types marry it does tend to get very interesting. Especially when handguns are involved! Fuck Me! So the band had a talk and all of us decided to do some more gigs. This led *Laurie Washburn, Stik Hoffman, Dave Kover and I* to take our band "Vision" back out on the road. At that point corporate radio strangelling the airwaves. And it really sucked! The old underground had turned into their parents and settled down with families and were now all raising kids. But the new underground was about to explode onto the world stage. The planets were coming into alignment. So I said goodbye to the "hippies" and hello to the "punks".

That fall, at age 26, I had the extremely bright Idea I wanted to be Jewish. So, I went into the hospital for a circumcision. Go figure! At the time I had this "insane" idea that the Jews were chosen people. "Monkey see monkey do; Squid wants to be jewish too"! So I wanted to convert. I thought, "squidly, you need to get some skin in the game". Oh Yea! Surely this would show the rabbi I was a team player! The rabbi was smiling from ear to ear! But big fucking mistake Squidly! For two months when ever I got a boner I had to use a "hair dryer on my willy". Ouch! Son of a Bitch! I didn't know that Stitches don't stretch. I was shocked and appalled at this

discovery. WTF! Only hot air or sticking willy into a glass of ice water would kill my hard ons. Help me I'm empty bookshelf! No one told me about the pain. If "Einstein" would have only asked about the recovery he would have left Mr. Wilson the fuck alone. That quickly put an end to any fucking religious aspirations I had about becoming jewish.



Some time after that episode Stik and I went to Veterans to see **Queen** perform their **A Night at the Opera** which featured the song **Bohemian Rhapsody**. They put on a pretty good show and Stik and I were kind of impressed. There were a lot of other local musicians there that night and everybody hung out downstairs by the mens room smoking dope. So I took this photo of Stik getting high. Some of them were jazzbo types. It was a great vib. They were all talking shop and I learned a few tricks. As things turned out Kathy and I decided that we wanted to move closer to her folks in Bexley Ohio but all the rental property was priced sky high. However, Kathy's mother had worked at Capital University for over 30 years. We learned that sometimes they would buy houses around the University in Bexley for storage or office space and rent them out to the professors or staff very cheaply. She promised to keep her eye out for us. But it wasn't until spring of 1977 that we got on a rental list.

In January of 1977 the city moved the print shop to 1260 East Broad Street and hired Leah Peoples, who was a fair skinned mulatto girl. A friend of the family; Jerry Hamond (city council) was a major player in the black community. He had pulled some strings to get her on board. Leah was from the upper class black hood of Berwick Ohio. My Greyship days had trained me well in local black culture. Back then I was always going to black parties on the east side where most of the black jazzbos hung out. Her first day on the job, it was obvious that she didn't have any experience at running a printing press. She was a typical 70's black girl but there was something very special about her that just clicked with me. We hit it off like peas and carrots. She soon took over our print shop life together. It felt like we had been married before in another lifetime. We were very comfortable with each other. She even introduced me to her mother and brother. I focused on keeping it professional. She could have broken up my marriage but made the choice to not hurt my family or create problems on the job for us. Clearly, we had a strong emotional bond. But we work hard to keep it non-sexual. After a while on the job she took up with some black dude from her college days at Columbus state. That helped us keep it all in balance. However, there were a few times when we were tempted to bite into the apple of love.

As 1977 rolled on I was still having problems syncing parts up in the recording process. It wasn't until the Star Track sessions in 1983 that I learned from **Ed**

Whitney about a “click track”. A click track helps you sync to the beat when over dubbing. 1977 saw me work on only two recording projects: *“Past Winds”* which featured Live Performances by **Vision**. Two of which were covers by **The Miracles** and **Buck Owens**. The 5 others were “topical songs” by me and were far removed from any pop aspirations. Of the batch there was the one Vision original by *Hoffman/NS/Kover* called *“Get Off My Back”*. It pretty much summed up my father in law. The whole in-law situation I disguise as a troubled romantic relationship. But he inspired the song. He was a royal cunt! By now both Stik and I were experiencing relationship issues. Kathy’s father in total contempt was always bitching at me. I don’t know if it was me or the fact that I was a musician. He just didn’t get me and was always putting me down. Her family loathed blacks. I on the other hand had lived with Blacks in Greyship and really dug their culture. It was getting to the point were I didn’t want to deal with them.

The other project was a first for me. The *“untitled project”* yielded three lo-fi pop songs: *“Yes, I Need You Loving”*, *“Words of this song”* and *“I’m Looking for You”*. Three pop songs. On these songs I was able to sync up all 4 parts and had achieved a somewhat passable demo. However, these songs reflexed my growing marriage problems. Kathy was growing distant. She was unhappy with me and the music. Looking back, the songs were self fulfilling prophecy. They foreshadowed great troubles ahead for my marriage to Kathy who was coming to accept her father’s criticism of me. The Ironic thing was he treated her far worse than he treated me. I think that Jarhead had been damaged by his World War Two experience. But the show must go on.

One day in early 1977 I stopped by Whitey Lunzar’s and pickup a new local music paper called **“Focus”**. It featured an article about a new LP entitled **“Slit-and Pre-Slit”** by **Jim Shepard**. In 1977 I thought I was the only one recording original D.I.Y. music. Later in 1978 I found out that **Mike Rep** and **Jim Shepard** were on the same wavelength as me which came as a shock. Not only this but **David Thomas** and **Peter Laughner** of **Rocket from the Tombs** had been trailblazing up in Cleveland back in 1974 & 1975. In the article Jim said that if anyone wanted to talk about doing their own LP they should give him a call. Doing an LP was not on my radar at the time but I was intrigued. So I called Jimbo and we talked and talked. But it wasn’t until 1979 at the **2rd Nowhere Show** that I actually met Jimbo backstage after the **Vertical Slit** set. He was from a different planet. He was also pursuing the same sort of sonic art that I was headed into. But at that point neither of us had mastered our muses. However, Jim was a few light years ahead of me in that regard.

With the band gigging again I was making enough bread to more than provide for my family. Kathy was working Capital University part time at night while I was working full time plus doing gigs on weekends. It was an unsustainable situation on our marriage. Our fate has been sealed. Slowly, she began to seek companionship

elsewhere. The music that kept us afloat was the thing that was driving us apart. That April of 1977 we moved into a university owned house on Pleasant Ridge Ave. So, true to my nature I began to set up the studio in the basement. But black clouds were gathering all around me. By this time Kathy began to resent the music which she felt took away from what little family time we had. But the cash was solid as long as I can keep the customers happy. But running a cover band was not about creating art. No way! It was about opium for the masses. It was about money. The baby needs new shoes! That's when I learned that money and art are like oil and water; they only mix with a high degree of agitation!

CONTRACT NO.
22317

Dynamic Entertainment, Inc.
"The Best in Talent"

494 S. Yearling Rd.
Columbus, Ohio 43213

614/237-6321

THIS CONTRACT for the personal services of musicians on the engagement described below, made this 29th day of April, 1977, between the undersigned Purchaser of Music (herein called "Employer") and 4 musicians.*

The musicians are engaged severally on the terms and conditions on the face hereof. The leader represents that the musicians already designated have agreed to be bound by said terms and conditions. Each musician yet to be chosen, upon acceptance, shall be bound by said terms and conditions. Each musician may enforce this agreement. The musicians severally agree to render services under the undersigned leader.

1. Name and Address of Place of Engagement Kenyon College Manning Lounge Gambier, OH

Print Name of Band or Group VISION

2. Date(s), starting and finishing time of engagement Saturday, May 7, 1977
10:00 p.m. - 2:00 a.m.

3. Type of Engagement (specify whether dance, stage show, banquet, etc.) Informal

4. WAGE AGREED UPON (Terms and Amount) \$ 300.00

This wage includes expenses agreed to be reimbursed by the employer in accordance with the attached schedule, or a schedule to be furnished the Employer on or before the date of engagement. With the return of contracts,

5. Employer will make payments as follows: (Specify when payments are to be made)
deposit of \$150.00 payable to Dynamic Entertainment, Inc. Balance of \$150.00 payable to Al "Nudge" Martin, Saturday, May 7, 1977.

The Employer shall at all times have complete supervision, direction and control over the services of musicians on this engagement and expressly reserves the right to control the manner, means and details of the performance of services by the musicians including the leader as well as the ends to be accomplished. If any musicians have not been chosen upon the signing of this contract, the leader shall, as agent for the Employer and under his instructions, hire such persons and any replacements as are required.

The leader shall, as agent of the Employer, enforce disciplinary measures for just cause, and carry out instructions as to selections and manner of performance. The agreement of the musicians to perform is subject to proven detention by sickness, accidents, riots, strikes, epidemics, acts of God, or any other legitimate conditions beyond their control. On behalf of the Employer the leader will distribute the amount received from the Employer to the musicians, including himself as indicated on the opposite side of this contract, or in place thereof on separate memorandum supplied to the Employer at or before the commencement of the employment hereunder and take and turn over to the Employer receipts therefor from each musician, including himself. The amount paid to the leader includes the cost of transportation, which will be reported by the leader, to the Employer.

Names of Musicians	Security Numbers (if any)
Al "Nudge" Martin	
Dick Hoffman Leader	
Dave Kovar	
Laurie Washburn	

Wynn Scott for Kenyon College

Print Employer's Name Wynn Scott
Signature of Employer [Signature]
City Gambier, Ohio Print Street Address 43022
Telephone 1-427-0194 ext 305 State OH Zip Code

Al "Nudge" Martin

Print Leader's Name Al "Nudge" Martin
Signature of Leader [Signature]
Print Street Address
City State Zip Code
Booking Agent [Signature]

*This contract does not conclusively determine the person liable to report and pay employment taxes and similar employer levies under rulings of the U. S. Internal Revenue Service and of some state agencies.

The Kenyon College show was a fun show but Wynn Scott wanted us to play disco music. WTF? FUCK DISCO! The kids were having a blast. They were dancing and getting drunk. We were doing our job! We were a 70's rock band! Somehow Mr. Scott was under the impression we were a **Donna Summers** act? Either that or he was tripping on his entertainment committee power? This really pissed off Laurie! Mr. Scott kept coming up between sets and demanding we "play disco". To please his ass we did a jam on "*Funky Monkey*" which was a funk song Stik and I had recorded in 1976. Finally after the gig Laurie blew up. The bitch went totally postal on poor bastard. The fur was flying everywhere! She cussed Mr. Butt Wipe out. I was vastly impressed. So I reckoned it was time to skaddle. I grabbed the money, packed the band up and beat feet for border. The next day the booking agent called and said that should learn some "disco numbers for situations like that." I told him "no thanks". That ended my relationship with the booking agent. So with the band coming to an end, and to make up for the lost cash flow, I took on a 2nd job from 6pm to 10pm, 5 day a week. It was printing gig at some Lutheran church in Upper Arlington Ohio.

A few weeks after this Stik calls and says its over between him and Laurie. I think he may have caught her cheating. The handwriting was on the wall. Five years later I would follow Stik's lead. But first I had to take a few detours. On June 22 of 1977 **Peter Laughner** died from acute pancreatitis due to severe drug and alcohol abuse. At the time both **Peter** and **Lester Bangs** were championing the emerging punk scene. But it wasn't until I hook up with Jim Shepard that I found out about **Pere Ubu** and **The Dead Boys** in Cleveland. Jim Shepard was a huge fan of Pere Ubu. Then on August 17th 1977 **Elvis Presley** kicked the bucket. The King was Dead! Long live the new kings **David Bowie** and **Brain Eno**! This was the first in a long series of wake up calls for me: **Keith Moon**, **John Lennon**, **Arlus Stitch**, **Kevyn Kausality** and **Jim Shepard**. It seemed after Elvis every few years another major musical influence in my life would croaked.

So from July to December of 1977 I had walked away from playing in a band. I was done. The teenage dream inspired by Jimi Hendrix was dead. I had my basement studio. I could be true to my creative impulse and focus on songwriting in total isolation. But the glory days of Mr. Browns were long gone. Besides, as far as I knew there wasn't any other places to meet musicians. Only at **Whitey Lunzar Music** downtown could you meet and jam around. It would be three years later on campus before I would run into other bands. My father-in law had won. But the winds of change were swirling all around the OSU campus. **Singing Dog**, **Moles** and **Magnolia Thunderpussy Records** had just opened. Boredom was giving way to punk. The record stores were beginning to attract proto-punks street bands like "The Blades". Unlike **Peaches Record Stores** these were mom and pop owned and were starting to focus on the punk movement. The whole campus scene had was changing. There is a saying; "When one door closes, another door would open". So from the frying pan into the fire I jumped. It was the dawning of a New Age of

Punk. And I was becoming inspired again.